



# Legislative Update

August 18, 1999

Vol. 9, No. 16

## Secretary Selecky Announces Reorganization, New Initiatives

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Under the new leadership of Secretary Mary Selecky, the Department of Health has begun targeted reorganization, aggressive recruitment for longstanding vacant leadership positions, and launched new initiatives on strategic planning, communications, and the feasibility of office space consolidation. The recently announced reorganization involves the realignment of duties for several executive positions as well as the creation of a Chief Technology Officer and Special Assistant position. The changes are as follows:

**State Health Officer** – The Department has begun a national search for a new Health Officer. Secretary Selecky will expand the responsibilities of the Health Officer to include oversight of the Division of Epidemiology, Health Statistics and Public Health Laboratories. In addition, the Health Officer will review the assessment resources in the agency and recommend how to best organize those resources to support the Department's work. The new Health Officer will also be responsible for hiring a new State Epidemiologist.

Until a new Health Officer is hired, Dr. Maxine Hayes will continue her dual role as Acting Health Officer and Assistant Secretary of the Division of Community and Family Health. Jac Davies will serve as Acting Secretary for the Division of Epidemiology, Health Statistics and Public Health Laboratories for six months. Juliet VanEenwyk will continue serving as Acting State Epidemiologist.

**Deputy Secretary** — The Department is also recruiting for a Deputy Secretary. The Deputy Secretary will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the agency. The Division of Management Services (excluding the Office of Information Resource Management – see below) will report to the Deputy Secretary. That division will be merged with the Office of the Secretary for a more integrated approach to administration. Frank Hickey will continue to lead Management Services and assist the Deputy Secretary in merging the division with the Office of the Secretary.

**Chief Technology Officer** – Secretary Selecky is creating the new position of Chief Technology Officer (CTO) in the Office of the Secretary. The CTO will conduct a review of information technology resources in the agency and recommend how best to organize them in order to improve internal communication and promote efficiency. The CTO will supervise the Office of Information Resource Management that is now part of the Division of Management Services.

**Other Changes** — Patty Hayes will lead policy development for the Department. That responsibility will be combined with legislative and constituent relations. The functions of her current office will be expanded, and it has been renamed the Office of Policy, Legislative, and Constituent Relations. Public health systems planning and development will be incorporated into an expanded local health office, headed by Joan Brewster. This office will develop the next Public Health Improvement Plan (PHIP) and continue to act as a liaison with local public health jurisdictions.

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Eric Slagle has moved to the position of Special Assistant in the Office of the Secretary where he oversees strategic planning, building consolidation activities, recruitment for vacant senior management positions and development of the drinking water database. Bill White will serve as Acting Assistant Secretary of the Division of Environmental Health in Slagle's absence. Ron Weaver will continue as Acting Assistant Secretary for the Division of Health Systems Quality Assurance.

Secretary Selecky also announced three new initiatives to address how the Department does business in the future:

- The Department will engage in a strategic planning process, to develop a vision of the future and a concrete, practical strategy for realizing it.

Preliminary work has begun. The plan is scheduled for completion by year's end.

- The Department is studying the feasibility of consolidating its offices in Thurston County. Department employees currently work in 19 different buildings in the Olympia area. That effort is in its early planning stages.
- Renee Guillierie, Communications Director, will review the education and public information resources in the Department and recommend how to organize them to better educate and inform the public. §

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## Council Appointed to Recommend Tobacco Prevention and Control Program

The Department of Health has announced members of the newly formed Tobacco Prevention and Control Council. The Council, formed at the request of Governor Locke, will advise Secretary Selecky as she prepares a December 1 legislative report. The report will include recommendations on tobacco prevention programs. Secretary of Health, Mary Selecky, will chair the Council. The Governor will also consider these recommendations as he develops his supplemental budget proposal, due for release in December. The resulting program should begin operation early in the next fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2000. The members of the new Council appointed to date are:

- Christine Gregoire, State Attorney General, Olympia
- Terry Bergeson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia
- Dr. Robert Jaffe, Washington State Medical Association, Seattle
- Joe Finkbonner, American Indian Health Commission, Bellingham
- Shannon Brewer, Youth Tobacco Activist, Spokane
- Sue Vermeulen, King County Nurses Association, Seattle

- Dr. Kim Marie Thorburn, Spokane Regional Health District, Spokane
- Dr. Willa Fisher, Bremerton-Kitsap County Health District, Bremerton
- Ann Marie Pomerinke, American Cancer Society Western Pacific Division, Seattle
- Vicki Ybarra, Washington State Board of Health, Toppenish
- Keith Baldwin, Washington State Hospital Association, Moses Lake
- Tim McAfee, Cessation Technical Advisory Group
- Alonzo Plough, Community-Based Programs Technical Advisory Group
- Terry Lindquist, School-Based Programs Technical Advisory Group
- Nancy Giunto, Public Education Technical Advisory Group

The following legislators have been appointed by their respective caucuses to work with the Department in developing the report:

- Senator Pat Thibaudeau, Seattle
- Senator Alex Deccio, Yakima
- Representative Gary Alexander, Olympia
- Representative Jeanne Edwards, Bothell

# Council Appointed to Recommend Tobacco Prevention and

## Control Program *Con't from Page 4*

Under the terms of the November 1998 settlement, Washington state will receive a total of \$4.02 billion from the tobacco industry over the next 25 years. The state will receive \$323.1 million in the current 1999-'01 biennium, and an average of \$149 million per year thereafter. The budget for the 1999-'01 biennium distributes the tobacco settlement funds to various programs, including tobacco prevention and control, the Basic Health Plan (BHP), Medicaid program for children's coverage and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). So far, Washington is the only state to devote their entire settlement to health.

The legislature has approved placing \$100 million in a dedicated account to fund tobacco prevention. (In comparison, Washington has received about \$2.5 million a year in federal and state funds for the last eight years. The tobacco industry spends about \$100 million to market tobacco each year in Washington alone.) These funds will be distributed over the next several years to communities and specific programs aimed at reducing and eliminating tobacco use. Determining the best and most effective use of those funds is the Council's task.

The boosted funding is coming at a time when it can be put to good use. In April 1999, the Department issued a disturbing report documenting the increase in tobacco use in the state during the last decade. From 1990 to 1998 smoking increased 38 percent among high school seniors and nearly doubled among sixth graders. Adult smoking rose in 1996 and 1997, ending a downward trend dating back to the late 1980s. More than 8,000 Washington residents died from smoking-related illnesses in 1997 — almost 20 percent of the total deaths that year. Counties with the highest rate of adult smoking from 1993 to 1997 were Grays Harbor, Lewis and Pacific counties. These counties also had some of the highest rates of maternal smoking, tobacco sales to minors and lung cancer deaths. The Department's findings are consistent with national figures showing a steady increase in youth smoking since the early 1990's and a slowing of the rate of decline in the number of adult smokers.

Research shows prevention programs work if they are comprehensive, long term and accountable. Washington's program will include:

*Prohibiting Youth Access:* It is important to enforce existing laws that prohibit the purchase of tobacco products by minors.

*Public Education:* One well-documented strategy to reduce the power of tobacco marketing is an intense campaign to counter pro-smoking messages. These efforts include multiple paid media (TV, radio, print, etc.), public relations, special events and promotions.

*Community-Based Programs:* Community involvement will be essential. A portion of the tobacco control funding will likely be provided to local government entities, community organizations, local businesses and other community partners.

*Cessation:* A comprehensive tobacco control program should not only encourage smokers to quit but also helps them do it.

*School-Based Programs:* School-based programs prevent and reduce tobacco use among children using evidence-based curricula, as well as tobacco-free policies, training for teachers, programs for parents, and youth cessation services.

Evaluations will be part of every program. If you would like more information about the tobacco settlement funds, please contact Brenda Suiter, the department's Project Manager, at (360) 236-4105. §

Legislative information is available on the Internet. The following are a few links that may be of interest:

### **Legislative Update Newsletter**

**[http://www.doh.wa.gov/publicat/99\\_legup/99\\_legup.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/publicat/99_legup/99_legup.htm)**

Legislative Information

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*Legislative Update* is published weekly  
by Washington State Department of  
Health, Office of Policy, Legislative and  
Constituent Relations during the Wash-  
ington State Legislative Session and  
periodically during interim and provides  
information and news about legislation  
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Published by the Office of Policy, Legislative & Constituent Relations

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Olympia, WA 98504-7890

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